

Message Text

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21

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15

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P R 130613Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5227

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION NATO

USCINCEUR

USNMR SHAPE

USDEL MBFR

UNCLAS THE HAGUE 725

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MPOL, MASS, NL

SUBJECT: DEFENSE BUDGET DEBATE

REF: THE HAGUE 635

SUMMARY: FIRST DAY OF DEFENSE DEBATE SAW MEMBERS

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CONCENTRATE AS EXPECTED ON QUESTION OF CAPITAL EXPENDI-

TURES, ESPECIALLY AS THEY RELATE TO REPLACEMENT OF F-104'S. PROGRESSIVE PARTIES LINED UP AGAINST PURCHASE OF ADVANCED AIR-COMBAT FIGHTERS, CONTRIBUTING TO THE ARMS RACE OR BUYING NUCLEAR-CAPABLE AIRCRAFT. CENTER AND RIGHT WING PARTIES STRESSED NECESSITY FOR NETHERLANDS TO FULFILL ITS ASSIGNED NATO AIR DEFENSE ROLE, TO SELECT BEST AIRCRAFT AVAILABLE, AND TO LET CABINET MAKE DECISION. END SUMMARY.

1. FIRST DAY OF DEFENSE BUDGET DEBATE IN SECOND CHAMBER FEB. 11 PROCEEDED AS EXPECTED WITH PARLIAMENTARIANS DEVOTING LARGE PERCENTAGE OF THEIR OPENING REMARKS TO F-104 REPLACEMENT ISSUE. SECOND AND FINAL DAY OF DEBATE WILL BE FEB. 13 WHEN DEFMIN VREDELING AND STATE SECRETARIES STEMERDINK AND VAN LENT REPLY TO NUMEROUS QUESTIONS PUT TO THEM. VOTING ON BUDGET AND ON AMENDING MOTIONS WILL ALSO TAKE PLACE FEB. 13.

2. PROGRESSIVE AND FAR LEFT PARTIES PRESSED FOR REPLACEMENT OF F-104'S (IF NECESSARY TO REPLACE THEM AT ALL) WITH SOMETHING OTHER THAN ADVANCED AIR-COMBAT FIGHTERS PRESENTLY BEING CONSIDERED BY FOUR-NATION CONSORTIUM. CHAIRMAN OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, DANKERT OF LABOR (PVDA) PARTY, ARGUED STRONGLY AGAINST SELECTING NEW GENERATION AIRCRAFT. PVDA PARLIAMENTARY FACTION WILL, HE SAID, DEMAND THAT THE AIRCRAFT SELECTED NOT CONTRIBUTE TO AN ARMS RACE, NOT COST THE GON MORE THAN THE CURRENT 2.3 BILLION GUILDERS EARMARKED FOR 102 REPLACEMENT AIRPLANES, AND BE SUITABLE FOR GROUND SUPPORT AS WELL AS AIR DEFENSE. CONTINUING HIS CAMPAIGN TO FORCE GON TO SELECT CHEAPER AND MORE LIMITED AIRCRAFT THAN CONSORTIUM HAS UNDER CONSIDERATION, DANKERT TOUTED F-5E OR JAGUAR AS BEING MORE APPROPRIATE BUYS FOR DUTCH. HE NOTED THAT DEFMIN SHOULD NOT COUNT ON PVDA SUPPORT FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDS FOR AN ADVANCED AIRCRAFT.

3. REGARDING THE ARMS RACE, DANKERT CLAIMED THAT SOVIETS WERE NOT AT MOMENT EVEN DEVELOPING AN AIRCRAFT WHICH WOULD BE SUPERIOR TO F-16. IF THE CONSORTIUM SHOULD OPT FOR UNCLASSIFIED

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THE F-16, DEFMIN WOULD HAVE TO CONVINCE THE PVDA FACTION THAT SUCH A WEAPONS SYSTEM BEING DEVELOPED BY THE USSR, THAT THE SOVIET PLANE WOULD COME INTO USE AT APPROXIMATELY SAME TIME AS THE F-16 ("WE WOULD NOT QUIBBLE OVER A FEW YEARS"), AND THAT THERE WOULD NOT BE A SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF COMPARABLE NATO AIRCRAFT ON HAND IN CENTRAL EUROPE TO COUNTER SOVIETS. DANKERT SAID ALSO THAT DEFMIN WAS BEING PUT ON NOTICE THAT HIS PARTY'S SECOND

CHAMBER CONTINGENT WOULD HOLD HIM TO HIS PROMISE TO POSTPONE DECISION ON A NUCLEAR TASK FOR THE F-104 REPLACEMENT UNTIL 1981, WHILE IN THE MEANTIME TRYING TO SHED THAT TASK THROUGH NATO AND MBFR. BUTTRESSING HIS BASIC ARGUMENT, DANKERT ADDED A NEW WRINKLE WHEN HE NOTED THAT IF THE GON SELECTED A MODERN HIGH CAPABILITY AIRCRAFT, IT WOULD BECOME MORE DIFFICULT IN THE FUTURE FOR THE DUTCH AIR FORCE TO DECREASE ITS NATO-ASSIGNED ROLE.

4. SPEAKING FOR RADICAL PARTY (PPR), WALTMANS ARGUED THAT ANY REPLACEMENT OF F-104'S WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE ARMS RACE. WALTMANS INTRODUCED A MOTION TO REDUCE BUDGETED AMOUNT FOR AIRCRAFT REPLACEMENT BY 60 MILLION GULDERS AND SAID THAT HIS PARTY WOULD VOTE AGAINST A NUMBER OF POINTS IN THE BUDGET RELATED TO NUCLEAR TAKS FOR THE ARMED FORCES. RADICALS SEE JUSTIFICATION FOR STARFIGHTER REPLACEMENT AS QUESTION OF ACHIEVING AIR SUPERIORITY OVER FRG, WHILE BASIC VIEWPOINT OF PARTY IS THAT DUTCH TROOPS IN GERMANY SHOULD COME HOME AND FOREIGN TROOPS SHOULD LEAVE NETHERLANDS.

5. DEFENSE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN, VAN ELSSEN OF CATHOLIC PARTY (KVP, STRESSED THAT REPLACEMENT CHOICE MUST BE MADE BY DEFMIN AND CABINET, NOT BY CHAMBER. COUNTERING TO SOME EXTENT DANKERT'S POINT ON SOVIET WEAPONS, VAN ELSSEN SAID THAT "A POINT TO CONSIDER IS THE GREAT EMPHASIS THE USSR IS PUTTING ON CONSTRUCTION OF MIG 23 AND 25 AIRCRAFT. THE PRESENT MIG 21 COULD NOT FIGHT BEYOND OUR EASTERN BORDER, BUT THE NEW AIRPLANES COULD FIGHT OVER THE NORTH SEA OR THE UK". GOING ON HE SAID "IT IS NO GOOD IN SENDING PILOTS UP IN AIRPLANES IN WHICH THEY HAVE LITTLE CONFIDENCE, NOR WOULD IT BE USEFUL TO BUY AIRCRAFT WHICH MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY PROTECTING AIRCRAFT".

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6. LIBERAL SPOKESMAN PLOEG SAID THAT REPLACEMENT AIRCRAFT SHOULD BE OF A NEW GENERATION AND SHOULD BE DESIGNED TO COMPETE FOR 15-20YEARS. MR. VAN LEEUWEN, ANTI-REVOLUTIONARY PARTY SPOKESMAN, TOOK A JAB AT DANKERT AND OTHERS BY NOTING THAT THE CHAMBER SEEMED TO HAVE DEVELOPED A NUMBER OF TECHNICAL AIRCRAFT SPECIALISTS. GOULD

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